

APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DATA COLLECTION

A. Initial Contact with Survey Companies

When it is expected that the company has received the letter requesting its participation, contact the establishment in person or by telephone to advise the company official of the type of survey information desired and to set a date and time for the visit. If letters requesting participation are hand delivered, these arrangements may be accomplished at the same time. It is important that the interview be arranged with a company representative familiar with company jobs, compensation, and employment conditions and practices.

B. Action When an Establishment Declines to Participate

If the company representative declines to participate during the initial contact or the data collection interview, explain why the information is desired to ensure that the refusal is not due to a lack of understanding of the purpose and nature of the survey. If the official still refuses to participate, report the reason to the survey chair who may make further efforts to obtain the company's participation.

C. The Interview

1. The interview with the company representative is a very important part of the data collector's assignment. Factual data must be obtained at a minimum expenditure of time and money to both the company and the U.S. Forces. Data collectors must be fully prepared to conduct each interview as efficiently as possible while establishing and maintaining good public relations. In preparation for the interview, data collectors should:

a. Be able to explain to company representatives the wage administration policies of the U.S. Government, the wage survey process, and the use that will be made of survey data.

b. Review thoroughly the data on kinds of jobs, numbers of employees, rates of pay, and other survey information collected on the last survey of the establishment.

c. Be thoroughly familiar with the survey key jobs and grade distinctions.

d. Be thoroughly familiar with data to be collected, the meaning and interpretation of questions on data collection sheets or fringe benefit questionnaires, and instructions for recording data on wage survey forms. Keep the instructions and key job definitions available for reference during the company contact.

e. Have a copy of current U.S. Forces pay schedule and benefit information, and be able to answer questions regarding this information.

2. Conduct

Data collectors should ensure that their appearance and behavior reflect credit on themselves and the U.S. Forces. They should be on time for appointments and polite and considerate in all dealings with company representatives.

3. Introductory Remarks

a. Initially, give the company official a brief explanation of wage determination policies. Explain that a major objective is to establish a satisfactory relationship between the general level of wage rates paid by local U.S. Forces activities and those paid by other employers in the area. To accomplish this objective, each wage area is surveyed periodically to ascertain going rates of pay for comparable work found in the survey companies. Wage survey data are carefully and confidentially reviewed at the local level and at higher Military Service Headquarters that approve the resulting wage schedules. After data review, survey key job weighted averages are arrayed to reflect the trend of rates by grade level. A pay line is then fit to this trend of rates. The resulting pay schedule does not provide rates that conform exactly to the average rate for each survey key job, but it does provide a rate relationship consistent with the overall pattern of prevailing rates found in survey companies. In addition, it provides employees equitable compensation levels in accordance with the responsibilities of their positions.

b. During the early part of the introductory phase of the interview, the data collectors should emphasize that information provided by the company will be treated confidentially and will not be divulged to unauthorized personnel. Also, they should explain that a summary of survey data will be sent to each participating company at the conclusion of the survey, and that the summary will not associate a specific company with its data.

D. Data Collection

1. Gathering accurate data is essential to the reliability and validity of wage survey results. Every effort should be made to obtain necessary data and to record it in sufficient detail to determine comparability with survey key jobs and ensure that accurate wage information is obtained. Gather data in a manner convenient to the company representative, realizing that data must be collected in person (for full-scale surveys) from knowledgeable company officials. Follow-up information may be obtained by telephone. If the company representative has no preference, the following approach is suggested.

a. Complete the company information sheet.

b. Match the survey jobs and obtain data necessary to complete data collection forms.

(1) Briefly explain the content of each survey job and get the company official's opinion on which jobs might be found at the company.

(2) For each possible job match, discuss the duties of the company job with the official. Review any formal company job descriptions for accuracy.

(3) Compare duties of company jobs with survey key job descriptions, Sometimes observing the job in operation helps determine comparability. DO NOT match jobs solely on the basis of job titles. Make an initial job match determination. This determination is subject review and change at the local or headquarters level, so appropriate documentation is vital.

(4) If a job match determination cannot be made or cannot be agreed upon by the data collectors, obtain detailed information on the company job duties.

(5) Explain on the appropriate forms differences between data collected during the prior survey and data collected on the current survey.

c. After job matches have been determined, obtain the number of employees at each pay rate for each matched job or questionable match. This may be done after each job match decision, or after all matching determinations have been made. Record and report all wage data obtained on matched jobs. Compare rates with contracts and explain any discrepancies.

d. Obtain data on remaining survey questions regarding pay, benefits and employment practices and/or conditions. Collect these data whether universally applied or provided to select individuals or groups of employees.

E. Inclusions

Data on jobs at participating companies are usable when:

1. The company job is comparable to a survey job. Remember that comparable does not necessarily mean identical. In general, the survey job descriptions are broad enough to allow collection of adequate wage data. If more than one company job is a match to a survey key job, obtain pay data for each of the company jobs. If the converse is true, try to obtain data on employees who mainly perform work comparable to each of the narrower survey jobs.

2. The number of employees at each rate in the rate range is obtained. If, however, the company can furnish only the total number of employees in the matched job and the weighted average pay rate for those employees, accept the data. Collect data in a format allowing conversion to the appropriate survey pay unit. For example, monthly rates are acceptable if the number of work hours per month is known and the survey pay unit is hourly. Incentive or piecework rates paid for comparable jobs may be used, provided the base rates and guaranteed rates are obtained. Also, record the type of incentive plan used by the company. Any such rates must be based either on documented average percentage-over-guaranteed-minimum by occupation or average weekly earnings for four or more recent pay periods.

F. Exclusions

1. Exclude data on company jobs that are definitely not comparable to survey jobs.

2. Exclude trainee, pensioner, part-time, or temporary jobs.

3. Exclude data on leader and supervisory jobs except when such duties are a part of the survey key job description.

4. Exclude data for jobs when 'only the rate range and not specific rates or weighted averages is available. Report the rate range data for informational purposes, however.

5. Exclude data for jobs paid below minimum rates established by the host country . Again, report the rates for informational reasons.

6. Report any apparent discriminatory hiring practices so the survey officials can make decisions on use of the data.

G. Summary of Data Collection Methods

The best method of obtaining survey data will depend to a large extent on the company official's records and willingness to allow data collectors to use them. Data may be obtained with the expenditure of relatively little time if the collectors have access to adequate job descriptions and pay records. Otherwise, a more lengthy interview with the company official may elicit the necessary data. Regardless of the method used, the rates and other information should be cross-checked with other available sources, such as collective bargaining agreements, to ensure the highest possible accuracy.